R E P O R T R E S U M E S

ED 011 604 24

CONCERNS OF STUDENT TEACHERS, A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE.

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REPORT NUMBER BR-5-0249-15 PUB DATE 13 APR 66

REPORT NUMBER M-3

CONTRACT OEC-6-10-108

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.09 HC-$0.72 18P.

DESCRIPTORS- *EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH, *TEACHER EDUCATION, BIBLIOGRAPHIES, *LITERATURE REVIEW, *STUDENT TEACHERS, *RESEARCH PROJECTS, AUSTIN

A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE ON THE CONCERNS OF STUDENT TEACHERS WAS MADE AND THE RESULTS SUMMARIZED. PARTS 1 AND 2 REPORTED ON EMPIRICAL AND SPECULATIVE STUDIES RESPECTIVELY. THE STUDENT-TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRES LOCATED IN THE EMPIRICAL STUDIES ARE APPENDED TO THE REPORT. PART 3 CONSISTS OF STUDIES HAVING RELEVANCE TO RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT IN TEACHER EDUCATION. A BIBLIOGRAPHY CONTAINING A LIST OF JOURNALS AND SPECIFIC ARTICLES CHECKED IS ATTACHED TO THE REPORT. (GD)

BR-5-0249-15
OEC-6-10-108
P.A. 24

AA000038

Memorandum 3

November 12, 1965

Revised: April 13, 1966

Counseling and Assessment Division
Research and Development Center in Teacher Education
College of Education
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Concerns of Student Teachers

A Review of the Literature

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U. S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION AND WELFARE
Office of Education
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ED011604

Concerns of Student Teachers - A Review

Introduction.

Purpose.

The purpose of this paper is to summarize the findings of a review of the literature on the concerns of student teachers. The term 'concerns' covers a wide range and other concepts such as anxieties, difficulties, and problems of the student before and during her internship in teaching are also included.

Outline of paper.

Parts I and II consist of empirical and speculative studies respectively. Part III is made up of studies which have some relevance to research being carried on by R & D.

If available, the questionaires used in the empirical studies (cited in Part I) will be found in Appendix A.

Appendix B is included in the event that a review of this same literature is needed at a later date. This appendix is a list of journals as well as specific articles checked and will therefore eliminate unnecessary duplications.

Empirical Studies.

A thorough review of the literature produced relatively few studies which could be considered empirical.

Study by Travers, etal.

Female elementary majors.

Instrument.

Travers, etal (1952) administered a sentence completion test to a group of female students (N=120) before and after their student teaching in the elementary grades. Although the test consisted of 21 items, only 3 sentences were analyzed for the purposes of this study[1]. One wonders if this constitutes enough data for a sound study.

Results - discipline and teacher popularity.

From these three sentence completion questions the pre-and post-data indicate that the student teachers were most concerned with discipline and with being liked by their pupils. The changes in these anxieties between pre-and post-testings were not significant.

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1. These three sentences and the responses can be found in Appendix A.

Thompson study.

Instrument.

Thompson (1963) conducted a more extensive investigation of anxieties of student teachers. He administered a 35-item check list of anxieties to students who were about to complete their student-teaching experience. At this point in their training, the subjects were asked to indicate which anxieties they had experienced both prior to and during the student-teaching period. This method of data gathering eliminates the Thompson study from being considered one of purely pre-and post-concerns.

Subjects.

The subjects included females in secondary (N=25) and elementary (N=47) education and a group of males (N=53) in secondary education.

An examination of Table II (in Appendix A) of the frequencies of anxieties reveals some interesting results.

Concerns before student teaching.

Major cnncern of entire subject group - the cooperating teacher.

Prior to student teaching:

1) the problem of what the critic (cooperating) teacher expected of the student teacher was checked the greatest number of times by all three subject groups. Of the three groups, the elementary majors checked this item the greatest number of times.
2) the elementary subjects checked the following concerns in decreasing order: what the pupils would be like, the student teacher's competence in the subject matter, and the standards of the cooperating teacher.

Co-major concern of female secondary students - subject matter competence.

3) the female secondary majors were equally concerned about their competence in the subject matter as the problem of what the critic teacher expected of them. This finding is consistent with the statement that secondary majors are more subject oriented than are elementary majors.

Secondary anxieties of male secondary majors.

4) the male secondary students next checked anxieties about lesson plans and about acceptance by the faculty and staff.

Concerns during student teaching.

These 125 subjects reported that somewhat different anxieties arose towards the end of their teaching internships;

Elementary majors - an honest opinion.

1) The problem of obtaining an honest opinion about their teaching from the cooperating teacher and the college supervisor was

checked most often by the elementary majors.

Secondary majors - material vs. time.

2) On the other hand, the secondary students both male and female - were most concerned with running out of material and having time left over.

Frequency of concerns- Subject groups compared.

Thompson found that both female groups checked more anxieties than did the male group. The female elementary subjects reported the greatest number of anxieties.

Other general results.

Finally, two results that could be expected proved true:

a) "...more anxieties originate in what has been heard or imagined than from any other source."(439)

b) Much more anxiety occurs before the student teaching experience than during it.

Wey Study

Wey's unpublished dissertation, A Study of the Difficulties of Student Teachers in the Secondary Schools As a Basis for the Improvement of Teachers Education with Particular Relevance to the Appalachian State Teachers College (1950), might have some relevance to this review; however, this study was not summarized in Dissertation Abstracts and Intralibrary Loan cannot guarantee that any publication can be borrowed.

Summary of Empirical Studies

Two, and perhaps three empirical studies on the concerns of student teachers were located. The study by Travers, et al (1952), was of female elementary majors. Although this did appear to be a classical pre-and post-study, the small number of test items (3) make me question the soundness of the results.

The Thompson study (1963) was broader in its use of subjects (females and males on both elementary and secondary levels) and instrument. My objection is that this is not a classical pre-post study since the data was gathered at only one point in the process and such factors as halo effects, forgetfulness,

etc. are bound to contaminate the "pre" data.

Wey's doctoral dissertation is unobtainable.

Speculative Articles.

These articles are not empirical studies and usually fall into the category of advice-giving; however, they are related in a non-experimental way to what we are doing in R&D. One should note that there are many speculative papers about this subject in the literature, and the articles in this section are cited as examples.

Ahlering Paper.

The paper by Ahlering (1963) is directed principally to the supervising teacher and deals with the problems of student teachers at the secondary level. Eight questions are listed with various responses by students. Although this paper does not have much relevance to R&D work per se, the responses to question VIII ("List problems you encountered in your student teaching") (339) may be of interest in a study of concerns during student teaching.

Article by Deiulio

Deiulio (1961) reports that on the basis of "...a review of the research and literature in the field (of student teaching) plus a close association with hundreds of student teachers over the last few years as a director of student field experiences..." (9) the student teachers' concerns fall into several problem areas. "These are problems of pre-student teaching experiences, communication, orientation, actual content of the student teaching experience, selection of personnel, evaluation, and the problem of limited experience." (9)

In the body of the paper, Deiulio relates specific examples of problems and concerns of student teachers. The article is comprehensive in scope and is the best of the three papers cited in this section.

Report by Schunk

Schunk's paper (1959) is written for the supervising teacher of the elementary student teacher and deals with some general needs that

the student teacher might have, e.g., the need for prestige and status, the need for self-analysis. The paper is written by the Coordinator of elementary student teaching at the University of Wyoming and does not appear to be written from a students' viewpoint.

Related Research.

The following articles are listed here because they appear to have some relevance to R&D work.

Chaltas' paper (1965) on the matching of student teachers with cooperating teachers is a theoretical paper. This might be useful if a study of student teacher assignment, per se, is made such as the procedures taken with the Metz sample. (Note B. Newlove's notes on Conference to Place Student Teachers with Cooperating Teachers, Fall, 1965).

Schueler and Gold have a recent report (1964) of the video recordings of student teachers at Hunter College. This is a continuation of the study reported in 1962 by Schueler, Gold, and Mitzel of Improvement of Student Teaching.

Finally, the article by Dropkin and Taylor, Perceived Problems of Beginning Teachers and Related Factors (1963), might be useful when our research reaches the point of follow-up of student teachers in their beginning year on the job.

November, 1965

Revised: April, 1966

Appendix A

Questionnaires

Table 1. Sentences and responses of Student Teachers in a study by Travers, etal (1952) pp. 371-373.

	Number of Responses Before and After Student - Teaching.	
I) I hope my class never...		
1)disciplinary problems; abusive; unruly; rowdy.	32	24
2)dislikes me; hates me; resents me; is antagonistic.	29	42
3)bored; inattentive; restless; critical; disinterested.	19	15
4)disrespectful; loss of respect for teacher.	9	7
5)afraid; fears me; tense.	6	11
6)is dull; dumb; CRMD*	4	3
7)feels school is a waste of time; doesn't want to learn; hates school.	1	6
8)Omit	15	9
9)Miscellaneous	6	4
II) I shall expect the pupils in my class ...		
1)(me) to respect me; to like me; to work with me; to adjust to my presence; to cooperate with me.	32	29
2)to be courteous; respect one another; to be friendly to one another; work cooperatively; to be friendly, helpful, kind.	30	35

* CRMD - no explanation was given for this response.

		Before	After
	3) to do the work...to the best of their ability; to work efficiently; to do the best work; to learn their lesson; to do what is expected of them; to do their best work; work to capacity; realize their responsibilities.	30	28
	4) to love coming to school; to enjoy school; like school; enjoy their work; be relaxed; happy; feel free to express their opinions.	11	9
	5) to be obedient; adhere to my routines; obey a few simple rules; to obey me; to follow directions; be attentive.	10	3
	6) to come to me with their problems; think of me as a friend; overcome their emotional difficulties with my help.	2	9
	7) Omit	8	8
	8) Miscellaneous	6	6
III)	When I become a teacher I suppose my greatest problem will be....		
	1) discipline	27	50
	2) getting to know the children; understanding the children; meeting their needs; establishing rapport; gaining their confidence.	18	12
	3) curriculum; appreach; interest; instruction; teaching methods; making them enjoy school; motivation; attention.	16	9

	Before	After
4) self confidence; relaxation; inexperience; inhibitions; (self inadequacies).	11	6
5) Organization; management; coordination; orderliness.	8	7
6) over-crowdedness; large group of children; finding enough time; clerical work.	6	4
7) showing favoritism; loving the children too much; fairness; giving each child individual attention.	4	8
8) over-ambitiousness; over-zealousness; to do all I want for the children.	2	2
9) omit	22	19
10) miscellaneous	7	3

Table 2: Frequencies of Anxieties, from a study by Thompson (1963).

TABLE 1

FREQUENCIES OF ANXIETIES EXPERIENCED BY ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-FIVE MALE AND FEMALE STUDENT TEACHERS

Description of anxiety	Number of Times Each Anxiety Experienced					
	47 Female Elem.		25 Female Sec.		53 Male Sec.	
	Prior	During	Prior	During	Prior	During
1. What will the critic teacher expect of me?	41	2	16	2	29	6
2. Does the critic teacher want a student teacher to work with?	7	5	3	0	11	7
3. What standards does the critic teacher maintain?	27	11	9	4	13	13
4. Will the critic teacher allow me to use my own initiative?	16	6	9	5	20	9
5. What are the critic teacher's special interests, personality characteristics, and likes and dislikes?	21	9	6	6	8	10
6. Will the critic teacher criticize me harshly if I make a mistake?	16	5	7	1	12	4
7. What should I do if my material has been covered and there is extra time?	7	17	11	7	11	15
8. What should I do if I make a mistake in a statement or a suggestion?	3	13	4	3	5	10
9. Can I deviate from the plan of work as outlined?	3	12	6	5	7	8
10. How should I dress?	19	0	5	1	13	1
11. Will I have authority to give grades and will they be accepted?	6	12	5	3	13	10
12. Will I be required to turn in my lesson plans, and who will evaluate them?	24	2	12	1	24	3
13. Do I really know my subject matter?	27	8	16	2	17	12
14. Will the pupils like me and respond to my guidance?	24	0	12	2	20	2
15. Will I be able to maintain desired standards of behavior?	24	8	8	4	13	12
16. What will these pupils be like?	28	0	11	1	20	1
17. What will the students be likely to do "to try me out?"	10	12	12	4	14	5
18. What will the students do if I make a mistake?	3	8	2	3	11	3
19. How should I behave if I'm unable to answer a student's question?	5	8	4	2	11	2
20. Will I be allowed to discipline students as I see fit?	12	12	7	3	12	6
21. How informal or formal should I be with students?	9	10	7	6	12	12
22. What is the community like, and will I enjoy living there?	11	0	4	0	2	0
23. Will I be able to do what is expected of me?	14	0	4	0	11	3
24. Will anything drastic happen if I make a mistake in following school policy?	2	4	1	0	4	4
25. Will my teaching assignment be too much for me to handle?	14	4	5	2	13	2
26. Am I capable of handling the extracurricular activities assigned?	2	1	1	1	1	0
27. What are the policies concerning classroom practices, the school, the faculty, and the curriculum?	15	5	6	0	11	5
28. How will the faculty and staff accept me?	14	6	8	0	23	2
29. Can I avail myself of the school's special services?	3	1	0	0	2	3
30. Who is responsible for evaluating my teaching and giving me a grade?	13	5	6	2	9	3
31. How often will my college supervisor visit and observe my teaching?	20	8	7	2	13	8
32. What will my supervisor be like?	17	2	8	0	15	2
33. Will I know beforehand of my college supervisor's visit?	9	7	7	1	10	4
34. How will I be evaluated?	13	16	8	5	12	4
35. Will the critic teacher and college supervisor give me an honest opinion of my teaching?	7	21	6	3	7	6
Totals	486	240	243	81	429	199

Appendix B

Sources and References

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Tables of Content Checked

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